

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5513

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, PINT, PO

SUBJ: MEDIA DEVELOPMENTS -- RADIO REORGANIZATION IS UNDER WAY

SUMMARY: THE GOP HAS ANNOUNCED AND PUT INTO EFFECT ITS FIRST
STEPS IN REORGANIZING THE NOW MOSTLY NATIONALIZED RADIO
BROADCAST SERVICES. END SUMMARY.

1. STATE-OWNED RADIO TAKES SHAPE: ALTHOUGH FORMAL STATUTES FOR
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ORGANIZATION OF THE RECENTLY NATIONALIZED RADIO STATIONS HAVE

YET TO BE COMPLETED, THE GOP HAS ANNOUNCED THE GENERAL OUTLINES OF THE NEW STATE RADIO OPERATION. THE UMBRELLA NAME FOR THE GOP'S NATIONAL NETWORKS WILL BE RADIODIFUSAO PROTUGUESA, WHICH WILL OPERATE ON MULTIPLE CHANNELS (REPORTEDLY FOUR IN LISBON), UTILIZING AT THE OUTSET THE AM AND FM FREQUENCIES FORMERLY USED BY THE STATIONS IT IS ABSORBING (I.E., IN LISBON THE GOVERNMENT'S EMISSORA NACIONAL AND THE PRIVATELY OWNED RADIO CLUBE PORTUGUES AND EMISSOROS ASSOCIADOS DE LISBOA). THE NEW PUBLIC ENTITY FOR RADIO BROADCAST WILL ABSORB ALL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE RADIO STATIONS EXCEPT FOR THE CATHOLIC CHURCH'S RADIO RENASCENCA AND LOW-POWER AMATEUR STATIONS. IN LISBON, TWO CHANNELS WILL BE "OFFICIAL RADIO" (PROGRAM ONE) WITHOUT COMMERCIALS, AND THE OTHER TWO CHANNELS (PROGRAM TWO) WILL CARRY COMMERCIALS AND MUSIC. THE GOP BEGAN TEST BROADCASTING DEC. 4 FOR PROGRAM TWO AND EMISSORA NACIONAL'S BROADCASTERS ALSO BEGAN IDENTIFYING THEIR CONTINUING SERVICE AS "RADIODIFUSAO PROTUGUESA, PROGRAMA 1." IT WAS ANNOUNCED THAT A SIX-MONTH EXPERIMENTAL PHASE OF OPERATIONS ALONG LINES REPORTED ABOVE WILL GO INTO EFFECT JAN 15. A GROUP OF LEFT-WING WORKERS OF THE NOW-DEFUNCT RADIO CLUBE PORTUGUES PROTESTED THAT THEY WERE EXCLUDED IN THE "SUDDEN AND UNEXPECTED RESUMPTION" OF BROADCASTING BY THE NEW GOVERNMENT ENTITY USING RCP FREQUENCIES AND FACILITIES; LAST WEEK THE GOP ANNOUNCED SUSPENSION OF 22 FORMER RCP EMPLOYEES, INCLUDING 10 MEMBERS OF THE 16-PERSON NEW STAFF.

2. RADIO RENASCENCA ON AIR: THE CATHOLIC-OWNED STATION HAS RESUMED ITS LISBON AM AND FM BROADCASTS, ALTHOUGH WITH A WEAK SIGNAL AND CONTINUING TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES. BROADCASTS CONTINUE NORMALLY IN THE NORTH VIA OPORTO STUDIOS AND TRANSMITTERS.

3. TELEVISION BIASES: NEWSCASTS ON THE STATE-OWNED STATION ARE MUCH MORE BALANCED THAN BEFORE NOW. 25, BUT THE PRO-COMMUNIST NEWSMEN STILL ON THE STAFF OCCASIONALLY PRODUCE BIASED REPORTS. FOR EXAMPLE, ON JAN. 4 AND ON OTHER DATES, THEY HAVE PRODUCED REPORTS ON MANAGEMENT-LABOR DISPUTES AT A TIMEX FACTORY WHICH TEND TO SPEAK OF THE COMPANY AS AN AGENT OF "AMERICAN IMPERIALISM," AND EDITORIALY ESPOUSE THE TRADE UNION'S COMPLAINTS.

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4. STATE PAPERS ARE SETTLING IN: MOST STATE-OWNED PAPERS HAVE CONTINUED A BASICALLY NONALIGNED, STRAIGHTFORWARD APPROACH TO DIFFICULT POLITICAL ISSUES SINCE RESUMING PUBLICATION. ONE OR TWO, NOTABLY LEFT-WING "DIARIO DE LISBOA," HAVE BEEN CRITICIZED BY THE GOP FOR UNBALANCED COVERAGE GIVEN INCIDENTS AT CAIAS PRISON IN LISBON LAST WEEK. CONSIDERABLE TENSION STILL EXISTS IN MANY NEWSROOMS WHERE NEWLY NAMED EDITORS ARE TRYING TO "KEEP THE LID ON" STAFFERS OF MANY POLITICAL TENDENCIES, INCLUDING

COMMUNISTS WHO NOW FIND THEMSELVES IN THE MINORITY.

5. COMMENT: GOP PLANS FOR MEDIA CONTROL CONTINUE TO TAKE
SHAPE IN BUSINESSLIKE FASHION. SO FAR, THE PRO-COMMUNIST
JOURNALISTS HAVE FOUND NO EFFECTIVE MEANS OF RESISTING THE
CHANGES.
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